CREWKERNE URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT

of

THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

for the year ended 31st December, 1970.

PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICERS

Medical Officer of Health

A.M. McCALL

V.R.D., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.

Deputy Medical Officer of Health

D.V. Hague, M.B., B.Ch., D.P.H.

Public Health Inspector

A.C.N. Gully, M.A.P.H.I., F.R.S.H.

Clerk to Medical Officer

Miss Y. Michael, M.A.

Health Visitor

Miss M. Hoskins, H.V., S.R.N.,S.C.M.

District Nurses

Miss G. Johnston, S.R.N.

Mrs. J.R. Sexton, S.R.N., S.C.M. (resigned Dec. 1970)

Miss A. Edwards, S.R.N., S.C.M. (from 14.12.70)

PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE

and

HOUSING COMMITTEE

The whole Council.

Health Department,
16, Church Street,
Crewkerne.
Somerset.

Telephone No. Crewkerne 3419.

To the Chairman and Councillors of the Crewkerne Urban District Council

Mr. Chairman and Councillors,

I beg to submit my Annual Report for 1970.

Although there was little infectious disease, the influenza epidemic in the early part of the year caused five deaths and a good deal of sickness.

Over the years I have been amazed at the lack of public interest in Council work. Occasionally some item, usually affecting the financial interest of a small section of the community, prompts a few people to attend monthly meetings, but generally no one bothers to attend and see the enormous amount of work carried out by the Council. My Report records some part of that work. For years one resident used to enquire when my Annual Report would be available in the Library for public reading. Unfortunately he has died and has not been replaced.

I am, Mr. Chairman and Councillors,
Your obedient Servant,
A.M. McCALL
Medical Officer of Health

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2017 with funding from
Wellcome Library

https://archive.org/details/b2912833x

SECTION A

Statistics and Social Conditions of the Area

Population The Registrar General has estimated the population of Crowborne to be 5,040 which gives a density of 3.9 per acre. I must emphasise that this is an estimate. The rateable value was £188,888 and the product of a penny rate was £752.

Birth Rate The corrected Birth Rate was 19.2 per thousand compared with a figure of 16 for England and Wales. There were two illegitimate births.

Death Rate The corrected Death Rate was 15.1 per thousand compared with the national figure of 11.7. Out of a total of 76 deaths, 17 were due to heart disease, 14 deaths were caused by stroke. There were 19 deaths to various forms of respiratory disease and 5 deaths due to influenza which was prevalent in the early part of the year. At the age of 65 men can expect to live another 12 years and women 15.9 years and 70% of males and 82% of females can be expected to live to 65 years. These cheering statistics, supplied by the Registrar General, also show that the expectation of life at birth has risen to 68.7 years for a boy and 74.9 years for a girl. Perhaps Womens' Lib. will have a moderating effect on this disparity.

Appendix A, Table 3 shows full details of the causes of deaths.

Maternal Mortality There were no maternal deaths in 1970.

Stillbirths There was one stillbirth during the year.

Infant Mortality Two infants died, one of bronchitis and one of congenital abnormality.

Social Habits There was little change in the social pattern compared with the previous year. The cost of living continued to rise.

SECTION B

General Provision of Health Services in the Area

The local health services provided by the County Council continued.

The Child Welfare Clinic was held twice a month but the additional clinic which was previously held once a month for immunisation was discontinued. Local private practitioners are now carrying out immunisations themselves with the aid of the computor at County Hall.

I carried out an annual medical inspection at each of the four schools in the town. Details of these inspections are shown in Appendix B, Table 2.

The Speech Therapy and Orthopaedic Clinics continued unchanged.

The School Dentist, who had been transferred to another part of the County in October, 1969, was not replaced until June.

The British Red Cross Society Centenary occurred on 4th August. The sufferings of the wounded at the Battle of Solferino in 1859 inspired five Swiss citizens to form the International Committee of the Red Cross and to call an International meeting at Geneva in 1863. After the outbreak of the Franco-Prussian War Col. Lloyd-Lindsay, V.C. made a public appeal to raise funds to help the wounded in France. The public response was immediate and he became the Society's first Chairman. Since then the Red Cross Society has expanded its activities in many spheres all over England. The small branch in Crewkerne carries on the good work. At the request of the Council they undertook the distribution of Meals on Wheels and had 44 names on their list at the end of the year. Last year I mentioned the Medical Loan centre they had established at the Clinic. In addition they run a club for the Physically Disabled which meets twice a month and in many other ways, particularly in transport, they assist our less fortunate members of the community.

Ramus House, a welfare home for the aged and financed by the County Council, continued to retain its full complement of 29 and there is a fairly long waiting list. Matron and her staff look after the residents extremely well and, although nursing is not strictly within their terms of service, they do devote great care and attention to those who fall seriously ill as it is almost impossible for a hospital bed to be found for these elderly people. At the beginning of the year the average age of the residents was 85 years, the highest in any County home.

The Crewkerne Old Peoples Welfare Association, with a membership of approximately 350, held weekly meetings in the Community Centre throughout the year and the average attendance was 75. In addition, a holiday in Torquay was arranged for 35 members and approximately 115 members took advantage of the chiropody service which is mainly financed by the Somerset County Council. This active Association is anxious to build a centre of their own and has already bought a suitable plot of land and also raised some £800. Their energetic Committee are to be congratulated.

SECTION C

Prevention and Control over Infectious Diseases and Other Diseases

The only infectious diseases notified during the period under review were a few cases of measles, one of scarlet fever and one of Tuberculosis.

One non-resident member of the teaching staff of a school was discovered to have a recurrence of infection at the end of 1969 and I skin tested 163 children. Seven were found to have positive re-actions but I am pleased to say th t all of them had been given B.C.G. vaccination previously which had provoked the reaction. In January I arranged a visit of the Mass Radiography Unit to X-Ray all the school staff and the public were invited to attend. Fortunately all the staff were clear. Full details of the visit and a follow-up visit in April are given in the Appendix.

I carried out my routine B.C.G. programme against tuberculosis in the autumn. Children born in 1959 were those offered vaccination. I vaccinated 52 at the Secondary Modern School and 16 at the Grammar School.

The epidemic of influenza which commenced at the end of 1969 carried on into the early part of 1970 and there were five deaths in Crewkerne.

SECTION D

Environmental Health Services

A. Sanitary Circumstances

Climatic Conditions In 1970 the weather was generally mild with a good summer.

Water Supply Despite the power cuts due to the strike of electricity supply workers, the Wessex Water Board were able to give a satisfactory supply throughout the year both in quality and quantity. Of the 1,800 houses in Crewkerne only two do not receive a mains supply of water. Sampling was carried out by both the Wessex Water Board (21 samples) and our health department (20 samples). All were satisfactory.

Drainage and Sewage Disposal The capacity of our eastern outfall works is not sufficient to deal satisfactorily with the demands made on it and consultant engineers were engaged to carry out an investigation to see what extension is necessary. The strain at present on the northern outfall works is less but the Council continued to pursue the possibility of combining with the Chard Rural District Council who are actively enlarging their Merriott sewage works.

Refuse Collection The Council continued their regular weekly collection of refuse. Partial incineration is carried out at the tip which is well maintained. The roads of the town are regularly swept and even after the annual fair in September the debris was quickly removed and Crewkerne soon returned to its normal well-kept appearance.

Public Conveniences The conveniences in Church Street and West Street were well maintained and suffered less damage from inconsiderate users.

Rodent Control Our part-time rodent control operator carried out the usual test baiting of Council property and sewers and dealt with private complaints promptly. There were no heavy infestations during the year.

Swimming Baths Three schools in the town have swimming baths. All use mains water and chlorinate in a satisfactory manner.

Nuisances The few complaints of nuisance reported to the Public Health Department were promptly dealt with by the Inspector and generally satisfactory results ensued.

B. Factories Act

Details of the inspections carried out by the Public Health Inspector are shown in Appendix D, Table 1.

C. Offices, Shops and Railway Premises Act

Routine inspections were carried out at a number of the 86 registered premises and only informal action was necessary to achieve a satisfactory standard.

D. Housing

At the end of the year the Council had 13 houses in the course of erection and private builders were erecting another seven. There were 190 applicants on the housing list at the end of the year which included 80 for old peoples' dwellings and seven urgent cases. Many of the applicants are at present resident outside the town, living in villages where little or no house building is taking place.

The Council continued to encourage applications for both standard and discretionary grants and gave approval to 22 applicants for standard grants and one discretionary grant.

E. Inspection and Supervision of Food

Milk Milk sampling was carried out regularly by the County Health Department and all unsatisfactory samples were followed up by the County Dairy Husbandry Adviser. No complaints about milk were received in my department during the year.

Ice Cream Thirteen premises are registered for the retail of pre-packed ice cream. Samples taken from ten of them during the summer months were all placed in provisional Grade One indicating that all the retailers are storing the ice cream in a satisfactory manner.

Meat There is no licensed slaughterhouse in the town and no routine meat inspection is carried out.

Food Hygiene Regulations There are 55 premises registered under these Regulations and all comply. Informal action was necessary occasionally but no statutory action resulted.

APPENDIX A TABLE 1

Registrar General's estimate of population mid 1970	5,040
Number of inhabited houses at the end of 1970 according to the Rate Book	1,800
Rateable Value	£188,888
Sum represented by a penny rate	£752
Area	1,291 acres

APPENDIX A TABLE 2

BIRTH RATE 19.2 Comparability Factor 1.34

		M	F	Total
Live Births	Total	38	34	72
	Legitimate	38	32	70
	Illegitimate	-	2	2
Stillbirths	Total	1	-	1
	Legitimate	1	-	1
	Illegitimate	-	-	-
Deaths of Infants under 1 year	Total	2	-	2
	Legitimate	2	-	2
	Illegitimate	-	-	-
Deaths of Infants under 4 weeks	Total	-	-	-
	Legitimate	-	-	-
	Illegitimate	-	-	-
Deaths of Infants under 1 week	Total	-	-	-
	Legitimate	-	-	-
	Illegitimate	-	-	-

APPENDIX A TABLE 3

DEATH RATE 15.1 Comparability Factor 1.00

	Sex	Total All ages	Under 4 wks.	Under 1 yr.	1-	5-	15-	25-	35-	45-	55-	65-	75+
Late effects of Respiratory Tuberculosis	M	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	F	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
Cancer of Intestine	M	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	F	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	1
Cancer of Larynx	M	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Cancer of Lung, Bronchus	M	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Cancer of Breast	F	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Cancer of Uterus	F	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
Cancer of Other Sites	M	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	F	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
Other Diseases of Nervous System	M	2	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Hypertensive Disease	M	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	F	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Ischaemic Heart Disease	M	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	3	1	3
	F	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	3
Other Forms of Heart Disease	M	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
	F	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Cerebrovascular Disease	M	12	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	8
	F	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Other Diseases of Circulatory System	M	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2
	F	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Influenza	M	3	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-
	F	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Intestinal Obstruction and Hernia	M	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	F	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Other Diseases of Digestive System	M	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	F	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Nephritis & Nephrosis	M	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Motor Vehicle Accients	M	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
All other Accidents	M	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	F	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Suicide & Self Inflicted Injuries	M	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
All other External Causes	M	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL ALL CAUSES	M	48	-	2	-	-	-	1	1	4	6	13	21
	F	28	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	10	15

APPENDIX B TABLE 1

Crewkerne Child Welfare Clinic

1. No. of children on register who attended during 1970

Born in 1970	...	...	69
Born in 1969	...	...	73
Born in 1965-68	...	...	103
		Total	245

2. No. of attendances in 1970 by children

Born in 1970	...	...	317
Born in 1969	...	...	142
Born in 1965-68	...	...	117
		Total	576

3. No. of sessions	...	...	28
4. No. of medical consultations		...	286
5. No. of doctor sessions	...	...	28

APPENDIX B, TABLE 2

Name of School	No. on Roll	No. inspected	Date of Medical Inspection	Children having milk	Children having dinner	Date of last Dental Inspection
Ashlands	309	134	22/23/24. 4.70	79.29%	99.03%	10.7.69
Crewkerne Grammar	171	22	19.2.70	-	97.66%	October 1970.
St. Bartholomew's	168	80	10/11/12. 6.70	89.29%	89.29%	12.6.69
Crewkerne Secondary Modern	340	95	11/13/16 2.70	-	70.59%	June 1970

APPENDIX C TABLE 1

Infectious Diseases

Scarlet Fever	...	1
Measles	...	4

Analysis of Cases Notified

	Under 1 yr.	1-2	2-3	3-4	4-5	5-10	10-15	15-20	20-35	35-45	45-55	55-65	65+
Scarlet Fever						1							
Measles		1		1		1	1						

Tuberculosis

Age Group	New Cases				Deaths			
	Respiratory		Non-Respiratory		Respiratory		Non-Respiratory	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
- 1								
1 - 5								
5 - 15								
15 - 25								
25 - 35								
35 - 45								
45 - 55								
55 - 65						1		
65+	1							
	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-

APPENDIX C TABLE 2

Crewkerne Chest X-Ray Sessions 1970

13th January, 1970

	Male	Female	Total
School Staff	18	33	51
Public	69	124	193
Total	87	157	244

Abnormalities	Male	Female	Total
Pneumonitis	-	1	1

20th & 21st April, 1970

	Male	Female	Total
School Staff	1	8	9
Public	143	148	291
Total	144	156	300

Abnormalities	Male	Female	Total
Cardiac Enlargement	1	-	1
Bronchitis	1	-	1
Abnormalities of Second rib	-	1	1
Total	2	1	2

APPENDIX D TABLE 1

Factories Acts 1937-1959

	No. on Register	No. of Inspections	No. of written notices	No. of occupiers prosecuted
(i) Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 enforced by Local Authority.	3	4	-	-
(ii) Factories not included in (i) in which Section 7 is enforced by Local Authority	36	51	-	-
(iii) Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding outworkers' premises)	-	-	-	-
	39	55	-	-

Cases in which defects were found	...	...	7
Cases in which defects were remedied	...	...	-
No. of outworkers in August List required by Section 110.	...	...	59

APPENDIX D TABLE 2

Action taken during year

1. No. of houses included in Clearance Areas for which Orders are still to be made. Nil

2. No. of houses in Clearance Areas which have been patched for temporary accommodation under Section 48 of the Housing Act 1957. Nil

3. No. of houses closed or demolished under Section 42 of the Housing Act, 1957 (Clearance Areas) Nil

4. Housing Act 1957 (Section 17 - Individual Unfits). No. of houses lost
   (i) (a) Houses demolished Nil
   (b) Houses closed 2
   (ii) For other purposes (road improvements etc.) Nil

5. No. of temporary dwellings (huts etc.) demolished Nil

6. No. of Houses declared unfit under
   (i) Section 9 of the Housing Act 1957 Nil
   (ii) Section 72 of the Housing Act 1969 Nil

7. No. of houses made fit during year 18

8. No. of unfit houses occupied under licence Nil

9. Houses in multiple occupation (Housing Acts, 1961 to 1969) Nil

10. Reconditioning of condemned houses - Exclusion from Clearance/Demolition Orders (Housing Act, 1961) 1

11. Substitution of Closing Order for Demolition Order (Housing Act 1961). Action taken. Nil

12. Housing Act, 1969 Section 28 General Improvement Areas - Number of Areas so defined None

13. Housing Act 1957 - Slum Clearance 1970 - 73

		1971	1972	1973	1974
1. Part III	a. Houses in areas to be declared	-	-	-	-
	b. Houses to be cleared				
2. Part II	Houses likely to be subject to demolition or closing orders	3	6	6	6

Remarks

14. Housing Act, 1964. Any action taken during year. Nil

15. Rent Act 1968 and Housing Act 1969
   (i) Certificates of Fair Rent - Certificates issued (if known) 1
   (ii) Certificates of Disrepair
   (a) No. of Applications received None
   (b) Certificates issued None

	Houses erected during year		Houses in course of erection		Gained from conversion of large houses or buildings into flats or dwellings	Lost from conversion of two or more houses into one dwellings
	For Slum Clearance	For other Purposes	For Slum Clearance	For other Purposes		
Local Authority	-	-		13	-	-
Private Enterprise	-	-		7	1	-

Number of Post-War Houses erected from 1st April, 1945 to 31st December, 1970.

By Local Authority	By Private Enterprise
396	334

Future Housing Programme (if known) (As requested by Ministry of Housing & Local Government Circular No. 21/65)

Programme forecast 71, 72, 73, 74.	71/72	36
	72/73	10
	73/74	10

(a) No. of temporary housing units occupied	(i) Prefabs	-
	(ii) Huts, etc.	-
(b) No. of houses found overcrowded		1

Houses required

(i) To replace houses scheduled for demolition	Nil
(ii) To abate overcrowding	1
(iii) For other purposes	6
(iv) Applications for Council houses at the end of the year	
(a) Urgent bona fide cases	7
(b) Applications for old people's dwellings	80
(c) Others	103
Total applications	190

	No. of Permanent Dwellings in District as at 31.12.69 (d)	GAINED a) Erected b) Conversion c) Council houses sold to P.E. during 1970 (b)			Total (a) + (b)	LOST Less houses a) Demolished b) Closed c) Sold during 1970 d) Conversion				No. of permanent dwellings in District as at 31.12.70
		a	b	c		a	b	c	d	
L.A.	506	-	-	-	506	-	-	2	-	504
P.E.	1293	-	1*	2	1298	-	2	-	-	1296
Totals	1799	-	1	2	1804	-	2	2	-	1800

* Closing Order removed after improvement works carried out.

OLD PEOPLES DWELLINGS

Total number erected to 31.12.70		Number in course of erection	
With County Council Aid	Without County Council Aid	With County Council Aid	Without County Council Aid
30	18	3	5

Grants by Local Authorities to private owners

Number of Applications and houses dealt with by Local Authority during year

	Received		Approved	
	Applications	No. of Dwellings	Applications	No. of Dwellings
1. Improvement Grants	1	1	1	1
2. Standard Grants	22	22	22	22
3. Special Grants	-		-	-